



OR HEAVEN OPENED TO MAN.

DEVOTED TO THE NEW DISPENSATION.

VOL. I.

BOSTON, MASS., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 1853.

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SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY.

[From the Democratic Review.]
EXISTENCE OF THE DEITY.
A Philosophical Argument.

PART SECOND.

[Continued.]

We will take our next inductions from the science of Astronomy, which is only another name for sublimity itself.

For countless centuries, the stars, high and mysterious, had shone on in the blue vault of immensity; and ignorant man knew nothing of the nature of their movements—could not divine even what they were. But although knowledge may sleep, the eye of curiosity never closes while the heart of the human reckons one beat. And so the eager question was repeated in every age, and over all lands—"What do these lights mean?" But neither to Magian on the plains of Shinar, nor to the prince of philosophers in the "city of the violet crown," came forth any answer from the silent solitudes of the sky.

At length a little boy was born. His dark eye inherited some rays from the light of the stars, and flashed with wild meaning from his childhood; and as he grew up, he became a gazer at all things beautiful, and a questioner of all things dim. He saw all eyes turned to those "isles of light," that gem the seas of the upper firmament; and he heard all lips repeat the earnest inquiry—"What do these lights mean?" But he heard no whisper in reply. He looked at them with his naked eye, but the God's type of their far-off letters could not be read so far. He ruminated on the mystery day and night, and either waking or sleeping he dreamed of the power of lenses; and then set about constructing glasses to read the riddle of the lofty stars. He succeeded; for there are no impossibilities to patient attention—there never was a bar unconquerable to the will that dares all things! And then for the first time the veil of Egyptian Isis was lifted up, and the secret of ages was out. The stony eyes of the Sphinx melted with tears of joy!

What a miracle is this of the telescope! Never a poet lived, but in his heart wished for pinions to soar and mingle with the stars. Lo! Here are the plumes. The telescope gives not the wings to us; but it ties them with lines of light to the stars, which thus fly down to us, and tell us all their hidden laws! Is there anything in the golden dreams of fable—in all the tales of fairy enchantment, to be compared to this sublime result, evolved by mathematical reason?

Next came the great Kepler, and erected his triangular pyramid of the three laws, on the summit of which Newton stood, to fix forever the true theory of the universe.

Let us glance a moment at these laws.
1. All the planetary orbits are regular ellipses, in the lower focus of which the sun is placed.

Propose the problem to yonder intelligent school-boy. Tell him to trace, on the paper, with his pen, an elliptical curve, and dot the two foci. Can he do it? Come sage skeptic, with all your boasted reason, can you do it yourself? The planets are masses of blind matter. Who then will dare assert, that such may trace, perpetually, for thousands of years, mathematical lines, with a regularity that no college professor can ever hope to equal?

2. The times occupied by any planet, in describing any given arcs of its orbit, are always as the areas of sectors, formed by straight lines drawn from the beginning and end of the arcs to the sun, as a center.

Let no one attempt the solution of this problem, in any specified case, unless he be a thorough mathematician. God solves it for all the planets.

3. But the third law of Kepler is still more astonishing. Hear! The squares of the periods of the planets' revolutions vary, as the cubes of their distance from the sun. What wonderful operations are these, to be the work of unthinking masses of matter! What music is this among the stars, to be sung by tongueless atoms!

Well might the inspired old man exclaim, "I have stolen the golden secret of the Egyptians. I will indulge my sacred fury. I care not whether my work be read now, or by posterity. I can afford to wait a century for readers when God himself has waited six thousand years for an observer!"

Some cold critics have called this insanity. The man must be insane to say so! I never perused the passage without tears. It is the language of reason and imagination, which at their sublimest depths are but one.

We will not speak of chances here. We may not even think of them, unless we might pilfer the algebra of the morning star!

PROMISCUOUS INDUCTIONS.

1. Some years ago it was keenly debated whether the sea was not receding and the general opinion of scientific men leaned strongly in favor of such a hypothesis.

At length a Swedish astronomer struck out a novel method of settling the controversy. He cut down a large pine tree that grew at the water's edge on the Gulf of Bothnia, and on counting the concentric circles, found that it was five hundred years old; and consequently during all that time, the ocean must have remained stationary. This was decisive. And yet how wonderful the fact. Millions had lived and died; nations had flourished and fallen; genius had sung its flame songs, and love had breathed its burning sighs and all had passed away;—and still the forest born grew on, buffeted by tempests, and chilled by freezing frosts, but nurtured also by genial summers, and fed on silver-singing rains, and listening to the bird-music in its branches, till half a millennium is gone; and still all that time it hath kept an exact account of its age, never losing a single year, all noted in beautiful cir-

cles, amid the fine woof of its own fibers. It is so with every cone of wood in the wide world. And again we ask, can aught but reason trace circles or reckon the count of passing time?

2. But let us select a last example. If anywhere we might suppose the absence of mathematical motion, we would expect to find it in those air-fiends that often desolate whole countries—the hurricanes of the tropics.

But modern science teaches us "that hurricanes are only whirlwinds on a larger scale. That they all have a regular axis of rotary motion, which axis is itself progressive, like a planet in its orbit, tracing an elliptical or parabolic curve." Sometimes the vortex of a storm covers an area of over five hundred square miles, and sweeps over distant seas, hundreds of leagues; but ever this dual motion is preserved. Aye,—beyond all question the hand that launches the tornado, and girds its dark bosom with thunder, is the same that originally "weighed the hills in scales, and the mountains in a balance;" and not poor, blind, and utterly impossible chance!

Thus it is plain, that all the motions in nature are mathematical. But the skeptic may object. The proposition is not proven. For although we may admit, that such a truth holds within the sphere of our actual observation, still what right have we to extend the predicate beyond the limits of that sphere? What right can we show to carry it back into the everlasting ages of the eternity without a beginning, and down to the incalculable years of that time, which shall never end? What right have we to break over the impassable limits of the sense of sight, and assert a law that we know only to appertain to a little segment of the circle of infinitude, of all the untrodden fields that may bloom with worlds, like flowers in the unexplored spaces, of which we behold but a twinkling point?

We have stated the objection in its full force; because it is much easier to answer than to state it.

We reply thus. All the forms of matter must be, of necessity, mathematical, simply because it is matter; as all its motions must likewise be so, for the reason that matter is inert.

We ask the reader to peruse the second scholium to the nineteenth proposition of the fourth book of Legendre. He will there find, that all the figures possible in space, are resolvable into the triangle, and, of course, must be mathematical.

Then let him turn to Arnett's Elements, where it is demonstrated that all motion must be in a straight line, unless controlled by some interfering force, when it takes the direction of a curve. So all motion must be mathematical or not be at all.

The simple answer that demolishes the whole objection is this. We see nothing but mathematical harmony in any other sphere. We see the unequivocal footsteps of a God within our sphere; and every fresh gush of light from the remotest suns, adds the evi-

dences that it is so everywhere else, in the wide universe. And this is enough.

We are not called upon to roam over all space, and ascend the heights of all eternity, merely to answer a supposition destitute of even a shadow of proof, and verging close on the confines of absurdity! If we have a God ourselves, that is sufficient, if we but pay him the proper adoration. We need not stop to inquire whether some little mote or molecule of sand does or does not gyrate without a God, somewhere in the vast void of immensity!

Now let us put together syllogistically the two separate propositions heretofore demonstrated, and note the logical result.

1. Nothing but mind can work mathematically.

2. All the motions of nature are strictly mathematical.

Then it must follow, as a conclusion utterly unassailable, that every effect in the universe, is produced by the immediate agency of mind.

To this, however, a plausible but false objection may be made. It was put against my argument last winter, by a distinguished pantheist of Boston.

It may be said, that although it be demonstrated, that matter can not geometrize, still we are not entitled thence to infer, that mind alone can; since there may be other substances in space beside matter and mind. What right, the objector may say, have we to assume duality only, in substantial existence? It is true, that we are acquainted within our own sphere with nothing but these. But our sphere is scarcely so much as an infinitesimal fraction of the whole universe. The entire concavity of the sky is a mere point, dotted in a space of inconceivable extent. The totality of our historical time, is not a second in that eternity without bound, which expands both behind and before us. And how can we know but beyond this paltry sphere, there may exist millions of substances, that are neither material nor mental, but of an altogether different, nay, contradictory nature? And even as to that, we are limited in our fragmentary sphere, by the solid wall of impassable sensation, that shuts us up as in a cage or prison of iron bars, in this our little world of fleeting appearances. For aught we can say to the contrary, here where we now dream our philosophical reveries, perhaps no loftier than those the oyster excogitates in his shell; yea, immediately here, in the very space occupied by this poor grain of earth, and yonder evanescent bubbles of air and sky, there may be now substances indefinite in number, the very opposite of matter and mind, and with which we have no sense fitted to converse. To deny this, says the sophist, were as unreasonable as for the animalcula in the dew-drop, to assert there is nothing but insects in the whole creation.

We can not forbear remarking, what a marvelous amount of credulity it implies, to put with a grave face such objections. The skeptic refuses to credit the existence of the God who made him, though the splendor of the divine attributes shines on the face of all nature

brighter than the blaze of a myriad suns; and yet he finds no difficulty at all in affirming the reality of innumerable beings, the impossible brood of a wild imagination, as devoid of all proof as the fables of Scottish fable—the veriest creatures of moonshine.

And yet even scientific men of eminent fame have entertained such vagaries, and gravely uttered them on the printed page. Dr. John Mason Good was absurd enough to give the hypothesis a place in that strange medley of fact and fiction, so pompously denominated "The Book of Nature." I can not but attribute such crude inanities to the general neglect of logic, mathematics, and true metaphysics among the moderns.

No person the least acquainted with logical analysis ever could have seriously started such an objection. It is founded on the sheerest ignorance of division. We showed, at an earlier stage of this inquiry, that the *abscisio infiniti* always exhausts the subject divided. Every thing in the whole compass of thought must be either a tree or not a tree. It is so with matter and mind. We define matter, that which possesses reason; and we define mind that which does not so possess reason. And it is evident to a school-boy, that every object that ever was, or will be, or possibly can be, must either possess reason or not possess it. He who fails to see this distinction may rest assured, that whatever may be his talents, the faculty of logical investigation is not to him an attainable accomplishment.

For surely, unless reason itself be a dream, and insanity the only wisdom, every substance must be active or passive, have intelligence and volition, or not. And, therefore, matter and mind are two logical categories that encompass all thought and exhaust all nature. We demonstrate, then, 1. That matter is passive, and consequently can not be supposed to originate its motions. 2. That no effect in nature can possibly occur without motion. We must, therefore, seek for causal force in the other category of universal substance, or nowhere. We find it in mind; and this is confirmed by our own inner consciousness, which assures us by the exercise of our voluntary activity, that the mind within us can and does produce motion, and cause effects as astonishing as they are beautiful. We next demonstrate that nothing but the reason, which perceives its own operations, can possibly work mathematically. And then we show by inductions, as wise as the generalizations of science, that all natural motions are mathematical. Hence, they must be produced by a cause possessing reason. And the calculation of chances proves most conclusively that to deny this, is an absurdity a thousand times worse than the ravings of utter madness.

As to all that exuberant sophistry about the impossibility of predicating any thing out of our own actual sphere, we may observe that it is but a common trick of sceptics when driven from the field of fair argument. They assume a feigned humility, meeker than the most pious believers. Creation becomes a

mere point, and life the flutter of a leaf in the sunbeam. They claim affinity with the blind worm and drowning beetle, and can do nothing but shiver with awe at the immensity above and beyond them. They ape all the ignorance of the child, without any of its trusting confidence. Its ardent, innocent love, or its eager, soaring hope.

We admit the grandeur of eternity—we wonder at the infinitude of space; and we freely confess our own littleness when compared, not with those mighty masses of moving matter that wheel on high over our heads, but with that Omnipotent Being who guides them in their courses.

For although our life is as grass, and our globe but a dot on the map of the universe, we have thought that wanders throughout eternity, and "before creation peopled earth," even now "rolls through chaos back," and with a glance dilates over all to be in the vast fields of futurity, and climbs with winged feet the golden ladder of all the stars. Nothing material can do that—not the beam of light, shot from equatorial suns—not the lightning which darts from heaven to earth in a moment. May we not assert, that although we be as nothing in the presence of that God "who wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds," yet one human soul of the countless millions of our species, is superior to all the worlds that God ever made or can make? It inherits the divine attribute of reason. They never knew the sublime "geometry of their own evolutions."

But it is utterly untrue, that we can predicate nothing beyond the sphere of our own sensation. That is one of the follies of exploded materialism. Do we not know that every where a triangle must have three and only three angles? Can we not affirm this truth as certainly of the space a million leagues beyond the orb of solar day, beyond the farthest star that twinkles in blue ether, as of the little figure on the paper but six inches from our eyes? Must not the radii of every circle in the universe be equal? Is not the whole everywhere greater than any of its parts? Can there be any phenomenon without a cause?—in any, the wildest of the wildernesses?—in any, the remotest cycle of eternity? Can love be a crime, or murder virtue, in any conceivable sphere of existence? Can truth become a lie for any being to whom atheism is not reason? All spheres alike belong to the soul, when it puts on its beautiful wings, and goes forth through the open door of universal faith to universal triumph. Then the stars beckon it to their bosom, and legions of angels fly down to meet it. Then it becomes a note in the eternal anthem of sphere-melodies that hymn the universal Father; and in affirming God, it conquers even death, and is already one of the immortals!

[To be continued.]

If we float over the surface of society with perpetual sunshine and favoring airs, how can we sound the shoals and gulf which lie below? Night brings out stars, as sorrow shows us truths.

NEW ERA.

"Behold I make all things New,"
"Hereafter ye shall see HEAVEN OPENED."

S. C. HEWITT,
Editor & Proprietor.
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BOSTON, WEDNESDAY, APR. 27, 1853.

The Convention.

SECOND DAY.

At the hour appointed, the Convention came together again on Thursday morning, April 7th; and soon after the opening of the meeting, the Committee on a National Convocation, made the following report:

The Committee are unanimously agreed in the opinion, that a National Gathering of the friends of Spiritualism, would decidedly subserve the interests of the great and beneficent Movement in which we are engaged, by the collective wisdom it would concentrate, the kindling anew of those fires of love and devotion, which are ever necessary to the successful establishment of essential and radical Truth; and by the formation of wise plans of useful action for the future. We, therefore, recommend,

First, That a National Convocation of Spiritualists be held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the 2d, 3d, and 4th days of September next.

Secondly, That the place of meeting be either the city of Rochester, N. Y., Philadelphia, Pa., or the city of Washington, as shall seem most expedient to those who may be appointed to carry this proposition into effect, after due consideration. And it is recommended,

Thirdly, That this Convention appoint a Committee of Correspondence, who may freely confer with each other, and more especially with its Chairman, concerning the best place to hold the meeting, together with such other matters as the said Committee may deem important to the right sort of action in relation to the general object in view. And the following individuals are specified as the proper persons to constitute the COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE, viz.:

S. C. Hewitt of Boston, *Chairman*,
Rufus Elmer, Springfield,
John M. Spear, Boston,
Adin Ballou, Hopedale, (Milford,)
Charles Partridge, New York,
Charles Hammond, Rochester, N. Y.,
Benj. Starbuck, Troy, N. Y.,
S. J. Finney, Cleveland, Ohio,
Daniel Gano, Cincinnati, "
M. B. Randall, Woodstock, Vt.,
Gibson Smith, So. Shaftsbury, Vt.,
Abel Alderson, Fayette, Miss.,
W. H. Mantz, St. Louis, Mo.,
H. K. Thayer, Philadelphia, Pa.,
M. A. Townsend, New Brighton, Pa.,
Wm. P. Donaldson, Hartford, Ct.,
Pierpont Turner, Winsted, "
Geo. S. C. Dow, Waterville, Me.,
Dr. — Thompson, Camden, N. J.,
Dr. J. S. Birdsall, "
A. V. Valentine, Detroit, Mich.,
Mrs. D. B. Harris, Providence, R. I.,
Sarah H. Whitman, "
Dr. — Greves, Milwaukee, Wis.,
Dr. B. F. Williams, San Francisco,
John T. Sullivan, Augusta, Ky.,
N. H. Rappleye, — Mexico,
H. Hills, — Tenn.,
A. T. Foss, Alton, Ill.,
G. T. Brown, Collinsville, Ill.,
Daniel S. Collins, "
Wm. Lawrence, "
Dr. McDowell, St. Louis, Mo.,

The Committee also recommend that the Chairman have power to add to the Committee of Correspondence, such persons, throughout the United States, as, in his judgment, would be likely to aid in the realization of the objects in view.

This Report having been duly laid before the Convention, it was accepted and adopted.

Br. Mandell now reported several interesting facts which will hereafter be given to the public, and was immediately followed by Adin Ballou of Hopedale, who presented the following important Resolutions, accompanying the same with most pertinent and practical remarks, which we cannot but hope will be heeded and acted upon, as they em-

nently deserve and need to be by all who heard them. We regret much that we are able to give only the *Resolutions* to the readers of this Journal, as we find it impossible to do any sort of justice to the lengthy and interesting commentary of their author. The Resolutions are as follows:

1. *Resolved*, That the conscious intelligent existence of human spirits after the dissolution of their material bodies, ever has been and ever must be a fundamental article of faith in all Religions, especially the Christian Religion.

2. *Resolved*, That the occasional manifestation of departed spirits to men in the flesh, under all Religions, is a recorded and indisputable fact.

3. *Resolved*, That Modern Spirit-Manifestations are as legitimate and necessary as Ancient Spirit-Manifestations.

4. *Resolved*, That unbelief in modern Spirit-Manifestations, and unbelief in ancient Spirit-Manifestations, are traceable to the same causes, and are alike repugnant to enlightened reason, as well as religion.

5. *Resolved*, That Spirit-Manifestations always have taken place, and necessarily always must take place, in accordance with certain laws and conditions of Spiritual Nature, which it is a plain dictate of wisdom to investigate—not sneer at or ignore.

6. *Resolved*, That the psychological conditions necessary to Spirit-Manifestations, through Mediums, are variously imperfect, from the least to the greatest extent, and therefore necessarily occasion many imperfect Manifestations.

7. *Resolved*, That the laws and conditions of Spirit-Manifestations necessarily include the laws and conditions of all lower psychological manifestations, and therefore that the latter are liable to be sometimes mistaken for the former.

8. *Resolved*, That a firm belief in genuine Spirit-Manifestations may coexist, and ought to coexist with an equally firm conviction, that very many so-called Spirit-Manifestations are a lower development of psychological activities.

9. *Resolved*, That every purporting Spirit-Manifestation ought to be judged by its intrinsic merits, its correlative facts, and its essential consonance with the universally acknowledged first principles of truth—not by its own assumptions and pretensions.

10. *Resolved*, That obviously irrational, factitious, absurd, or immoral conduct, assuming to have been dictated or recommended by departed spirits, ought to be inflexibly discountenanced by all sober Spiritualists.

11. *Resolved*, That a rational and solid faith in Spirit-Manifestations necessarily leads to earnest practical reformation of life, in respect to both individual and social habits; and that any pretended faith in Spiritualism which leaves its professors contented with present popular evil practices, customs and institutions, is vain.

12. *Resolved*, That a new Order of religious and civil society, free from the superstition, bigotry, oppression, selfishness, antagonism, poverty and vice of the present order is indicated by all reliable Spirit-revelations ancient and modern, is indispensable to the progress of the human race, and ought to be promoted in every practicable way by all professed Spiritualists.

13. *Resolved*, That the sullen contempt, vulgar sneers, spiteful opposition, and anathematizing denunciations which have been called forth by the Spiritual Movement now developing itself, are unmistakable proofs of the Saduceism, Phariseism, Sensualism, Traditionism, Sectarianism, and Infidelism, from which they proceed.

14. *Resolved*, That, by the help of the Great Father Spirit, and the unfolding ministrations of innumerable angelic Spirits, we will live down all opposition, and inaugurate the Era of Earth's conjunction with Heaven.

After the speech of Mr. Ballou, very little else was said or done till the afternoon session, which convened at 1½ o'clock, when the preceding Resolutions, on motion of C. H. White, were accepted and adopted as the general expression of the very large, interested and intelligent audience.

H. C. Wright then made some observations concerning the doctrines of the aforesaid Resolutions. He fully endorsed the sentiments which Mr. Ballou had expressed, both in the Resolutions which had been adopted, and the remarks offered thereon. He also gave expression to some views of duties with respect to the two worlds—the present and the future. He said it was an imperative duty of man to take care of the material body, while he is a resident in it. The duties

of this life should all be fulfilled while we remain here below. And then when we go to the next world, we shall be under obligation to perform the duties of that world. He hinted that many were attempting to get along too fast—and some were seemingly overlooking the work to be done now and here, in their dreams of the life to come. It was like the caterpillar, who in a dangerous position, dreams of becoming a butterfly; and while cogitating that fact, falls from his place, and receives much injury. While we are caterpillars, let us do the work and the duties devolving upon us, as such, and when we emerge into the butterfly state, let us be prepared to perform the functions of that state.

Such, in substance, were some of the remarks of our friend Wright, who is not a full believer in what is peculiar to the Spiritual theory, but who nevertheless sympathizes with some of the essential principles and sentiments of the movement in which we are engaged. As he was offering the above remarks, however, we could not help thinking they were partly true, and partly false. In so far as our friend's illustrations and remarks had strict reference to what is *actual*, we, of course, can have no objection to them; and such was the case, without doubt, to some extent. There may be danger, in individual cases, among the Spiritualists, of carrying their views and feelings so far, as in a great degree to overlook the present, and more obvious duties of life, and thus injure themselves and those around them. But we submit that there is equal, if not greater danger in going to the other extreme, and becoming too exclusively material. Suppose the Spiritualists should become too exclusively devoted to their joyous expectations, so as to forget almost, their outward and material relations, (which we are very far from recommending,) it would be no more than a balance for the predominant fact of life, as it is here below, on the other side of the question.—If materialism were the object and end of existence, then it might be worth while to be very anxious, lest we should forget that fact, in our anxiety to grasp, what to us then, would be a mere phantom of the imagination, in the region of Spirituality.

And then again, it may be doubted whether the caterpillar and butterfly illustration above, can be made to go so completely on "all fours," as to apply to the extent seemingly intended by our friend. Man has an aspiration for the ideal, but the caterpillar has not. The latter has no sort of consciousness of the butterfly world to which he is destined, till he enters it; but man, on the contrary, obtains a degree of consciousness, in very early life, of a state of existence above and very superior to the present.—He has this consciousness, simply because he is *man*, and immortal. And the more he cultivates the Spiritual, without overlooking its proper balance with the material, the more will this consciousness grow with him, and the better will he be prepared for the real duties of both the material and the spiritual sides of life. The substance of the whole matter then, lies just here, if there be danger of excess anywhere, it lies in Materialism, instead of Spiritualism.

Rufus Elmer succeeded friend Wright, and read to the Convention, with some pertinent comments, the New York Tribune's abstract of Rev. Charles Beecher's Report, which we gave to our readers last week. And after this, it was our privilege to give some detail of *practical matters*—what the spirits propose to do for the welfare of man. A brief and necessarily imperfect description was given of a new material for building, and the substances, composing it—of a new plan for villages on a Circular scale, with Unitary arrangements, such as shall meet the needs of both the individual and the social nature of man. A new method of warming houses and of generating heat, together with an entirely new mode or order of Architecture, were also slightly detailed, but are not given here, because we intend to present them to our readers ere long in a more compact and intelligible form, than either time or space allows of at present. Suffice it to say here, that the drift of our remarks tended to show that the spirits do not propose to confine themselves to "table tipplings" and other astonishing wonders; but that while these wonders are being exhibited to call attention to their source, the higher powers are ever busy in devising ways and means for the individual and social redemption of man.

Rev. J. S. Loveland spoke somewhat at length concerning the progress of Spiritualism in Charlestown—of his own meetings with the friends in that city,

and of the consistency of these with little or no merely formal organization.—He also spoke of other matters of much interest to the movement, and was listened to with much pleasure by nearly a thousand hearers.

John M. Spear, of Boston, being specially called upon for that purpose, made some observations concerning the methods of healing as they had been illustrated in his own experience, as a Medium. Among other things, he spoke of his late ability of seeing things which were really many miles away, and which he subsequently found to be just as he saw them in vision. He gave a case in point, which happened but a short time before, of his seeing a room, furnished in a peculiar manner, which, on going to Springfield a few days afterwards by Spiritual direction, he found to be exactly as he saw it in vision. The whole case forms an interesting little history, and we may give it in full at some more convenient season.

When Mr. Spear concluded his remarks, 4 o'clock had nearly arrived, and the President gave notice that all who desired could then retire, as we were to have a short season of quiet, and perhaps some exhibitions of Spirit Power and Intelligence. A very small portion of the audience now left the hall, and the remainder, after a brief period of recreation, became exceedingly quiet at the call of the Chairman, who invited the more fully developed mediums to take seats on the platform together.

These general arrangements were made in consequence of the intimations contained in the following Spiritual Communication which was given through the hand of Mr. Spear during the intermission at noon. A more general direction was given during the forenoon while Mr. Spear sat upon the platform; but as that is not at hand, we give this as a substitute:—

"This afternoon, let all persons be present at the select gathering, who can persuade themselves to remain during the expected exhibition, and who will be most quiet. Let all present be requested to remain until the exhibition is concluded. Let the doors be closed, and the ventilation be ample.

BENJAMIN RUSH."

We were all now quietly seated, and most of us doubtless anxiously waiting for some development, of the nature and mode of which, no one present had, or could have the least idea, because the actors in this

SPIRITUAL DRAMA,

the first public thing of the kind in human history, were entirely "behind the scenes."

The acting now began in good earnest. The Hero of the Play, was a poor, ignorant Slave boy, who represented MATERIALISM. He had lost his father, mother and brother by death, and his mourning was most bitter—his lamentations the most heart-piercing and awful one could well imagine. John M. Spear was the medium-actor in this department.

The poor slave boy, with manacles on his hands, saw his father, mother and brother die. He saw them put in the dark, cold grave, and buried there, down deep from his sight. That was all he knew about the matter. Nothing above what he saw with his material eyes, was at all apprehended by him. But he had a heart nevertheless, filled with deep yearnings for those he loved; and the most bitter tears and heart-rending lamentations, flowed forth from the depths of his sorrowful spirit. In deepest anguish he called again and again, for his much loved brother. But no answering voice came to him from the silent regions of the dead. Again and again did he repeat the flood of grief which weighed down his young soul to earth, to death and the grave. But still no answering voice came that he could hear—no form appeared that he could see. So it is ever with Materialism, in its myriad forms, through all ages and in all climes; and so must it ever be.

It was the effort on the other side, to convince the poor slave boy that his father, his mother and brother were *really living* and present with him. But he called it a "lie!" "Did he not see them die? Did he not see them buried in the grave? Was not that sufficient for him? What better evidence could he have?" Still it was insisted, that his friends were alive; and various ingenious methods were taken to make him understand the matter, but all to no purpose. And when at the lowest point of his despair and agony, forth steps Mr. Finney, as though moved by the lightning's shock, and charges this woful result to the degeneracy of the Pulpit—to a mere secta-

rian theology and religion. This part of the play was the most perfect of any, and was acted with great spirit. The doctrine of Progression was advocated with great power and clearness. And altogether, we never saw the little, petty "Churchianities"—(not Christianities, for they are ONE, and not sectarian) look so mean in all our life before. We do not wonder that the most miserably shriveled tools of mere secular partyism—backed up by theological sectarianism, some of whom were present on this occasion, should feel "cut to the quick," and subsequently give some slight vent to their anguish in such poor apologies for a decent share of gumption, as the attempt of the Springfield Republican to report what occurred on this occasion. We can pardon men without brains, for their lack of ideas; but when, in the language of Paul, such people come to "think" they are "something," when in fact they are "nothing" we not only think they "deceive themselves," but that they occupy positions, to which, to say the least, they were not "born" in any good, proper sense. Gentlemen (!) your doom is sealed; the age is overtaking you, and will soon bring you to your own proper level. Prepare for your destiny.

The Drama, of which we have briefly spoken, was cut short prematurely, by a singular and seemingly unlucky circumstance. That circumstance was this. While Mr. Finney was in the midst of a powerful and most eloquent speech, near the conclusion of his piece, a man who was sitting on the platform arose and attempted to give an explanation of the various scenes and the meaning of what we had been witnessing. This seemingly unlooked-for transaction, disturbed all further operations, and the Drama concluded without a triumph.—What was the meaning of this conclusion? To us, the mystery has been solved, and we will give it more fully hereafter.

In the evening, we listened to an interesting and common sense discourse on Insanity, by A. J. Davis. We shall attempt no abstract of it here, as we hope to give it in full to our readers at some future time.

The appointment of a State Central Committee for the ensuing Quarter, whose names are given below,—together with an earnest and interesting speech from R. P. Ambler of New York, concluded the exercises of the evening and the sessions of this, the fourth, the most interesting, and the most orderly Convention we have yet had. No "jar" disturbed the even flow of thought and sentiment; universal satisfaction, among the friends of the movement, was the one predominant expression. Thus may it ever be, as we gather, from time to time, to consult of ways and means, on our part, for the better and more speedy reception of the Love and Wisdom of the Spheres above, in practical human life below.

The following Spiritual Communication was given soon after the adjournment of the Convention, and with this we conclude:

"VALEDICTORY BY THE SPIRITS."

Spirits now say, that the gathering which has just been had, will be productive of the goods in the ways which will now be mentioned:

FIRST: More earnest and more careful attention will be called forth.

SECONDLY: It will be discovered that a gathering of this kind can be conducted in most quiet and orderly methods.

THIRDLY: It will be distinctly perceived, that high and most beneficent things are contemplated.

FOURTHLY: It will lead many to think and converse on the new subject.

FIFTHLY: Thought and conversation will lead to wise reception.

SIXTHLY: Its deliberations, and sayings, and doings will greatly disarm the mere sneers.

SEVENTHLY: It will lead to the calling of other gatherings of similar kind; and to a NATIONAL CONVOCATION; and, at suitable season, to an EARTHLY CONVOCATION.

For the Association of Beneficents.

BENJAMIN RUSH."

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS.

The following Resolutions were passed at the convention in Springfield, in addition to those already reported. We put them under this head, because they slipped our eye till just as our present number was going to press.

Resolved, That in all our investigations of Spiritual Manifestations, we consider it absolutely necessary to "try the spirits," not by the present popular religious standard of faith, but by the highest perceptions of Reason, based on demonstrable and tangible evidence.

Resolved That the proceedings of this Convention, be prepared for publication and reported in the several Spiritual papers.

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

The following are the names of the State Central Committee for the ensuing Quarter:

S. C. HEWITT, Boston,
ALBERT BINGHAM, "
JOHN M. SPEAR, "
DR. H. F. GARDNER, Springfield,
E. D. DRAPER, Hopedale, (Milford,)
DR. REUBEN BARRON, Palmer,
D. J. MANDELL, Athol Depot,

ASTOUNDING FACTS.

BY J. A. GRIDLEY, M. D.

NUMBER TEN

Are there any strangers present? "Yes, three." Are they in advance of you? "Yes." Will these friends please introduce themselves? I asked, as I advanced towards the Medium. His hand was at once extended towards me, and as I took it, the Spirit said very clearly and distinctly, "This old gentleman, friend Bryant, as you call him, says this is Dr. Gridley,—my own name is Charles Clarke." I now turned and introduced Mr. Clarke to Mr. Searle, who was sitting near me. He, (Mr. Clarke) replied instantly, as he took Mr. Searle by the hand, friend Bryant says, this is my grandson.

Thus were we introduced most surprisingly to us all, to a stranger spirit, by our most precious and faithful friend of the inner circle. I now requested the stranger to give us a brief history of his earthly life, and any advice he thought befitting. He had given his name as before stated. He then said, I was a minister eight years, of what I supposed to be the Gospel at the time. My residence was in the city of New York. I have been absent from the body about thirteen years. What degree did you enter? I asked. "The third." Where are you now? "In the sixth." How does it happen that you have passed from the third to the sixth circle, while friend Bryant who has been in the Spirit World an equal length of time, entered the last of the fourth and is now only in the fifth? He replied—"Friend Bryant, I perceive, has spent his energies and his life almost, in seeking the good of mankind in general, and of his numerous descendants in particular; while I on the other hand found myself so low, that I have devoted nearly all to my own improvement."

This reply satisfied me entirely. I myself had felt the same thing, while my thoughts reverted instantly to Paul's assertion, "I die daily;" and again,—"So then death worketh in us but life in you." "You swallow up our life." His reply did not satisfy the whole of the circle, however; and one remarked, "He that watereth, shall also be watered himself." Yes, said he, friend Bryant fills again; but instead of assimilating what he gets to his own growth, he still pours it upon others. Tell your circle, said he, (I do not know how many of them are absent)—he had, I think, got an intimation to that parenthesis from friend Bryant, as it was a very rainy evening and many were absent—tell your circle that riches do not consist in gold and silver;—everything durable must be a deposit in the interior. The Bible, said he, is the Book of Books. After he had uttered a number of beautiful things, during which utterance he twice paused, and remarked that he wished to speak now to the inner circle; and so after waiting a short time, he would again resume his conversation with us. He finally said, "I do not know but I am intruding. Your Spirit friends (and they are mine too) seem to have drawn back, as it would appear, to make me room." I answered, I think they consider it a privilege to do so. Friend Bryant at this instance seized the organs of the Medium, and said, "I do, for he is instructing us, as well as you;" and then he apparently as quickly retired. You say the Bible is the "Book of Books." I have ever, and do now thus consider it; but what think you of the Bible statements that "in the very day a man's breath goeth forth, his thoughts perish?" And again; "The dead know not anything!" These sayings are not true, of which these invisible friends are witnesses? Were those writers then false witnesses? "Not intentionally so,—though most seriously mistaken. You must not forget that Christ brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel. And if it was brought to light then, it could not have been known before. The writers of the Old Testament, then, wrote as they must of neces-

sity have done, according to the light they then had—like any men, wise in their own day, but fallible."

Will the other stranger speak to us? "He declines—says it is the first time he has visited your circle, and that he wishes to look about a little." He gave his name, however, as Henry Gooduan. Friend Clarke again taking me by the hand, said, "I thank God for what he has done for you. I see you in the fifth degree; and I see, too, a work going on here, that I have found nowhere else." He then bade us good night, with some encouragement that he should visit us again.

I had forgotten to state, that in the course of his remarks, he said to us, "Friend Bryant is a faithful friend to you, in whom you may safely confide; and your inner circle, as far as I now see, is a faithful,—truth-loving circle."

A stranger spirit to us all, announced himself on another occasion as Charles Somers. He gave us wholesome advice—stating that there were lying, deceitful spirits as well as good ones; that we must carefully test them, and cautiously receive their instruction, till we had done so. He said our Medium was not so far advanced, as to enable the more lofty and holy spirits to communicate always as they would desire; that his affinity for goodness was by no means strong, etc., etc.

During another of our sittings, I said, Friend Bryant, are there any strangers present to-night? "Yes, three." Are they in advance of you? "Yes."

I then invited them to introduce themselves. "I think," said a solemn, grave and heavy voice, "that my name is familiar to you. The first General and President of your country, George Washington." The Medium's hand was extended, and I approached and took it. I then called for the other strangers. The spirit again spoke—"This is my friend La Fayette." I now requested the latter to make some remarks to us. But he answered, "I prefer not to speak; I am not your principal guest." I asked for the third friend. The first voice then said—"That friend prefers not to be introduced. We now ventured to enter into familiar conversation with him, whom we had been taught to venerate in our hearts, upon the subject of War. He was as strongly opposed to war as any of us. I asked him whether he thought our independence might not have been secured by more pacific means. He replied that mankind were not at that time sufficiently advanced to secure such a boon without violence; that his conscience had never troubled him for the course he took in the Revolutionary service. The visit was short, but the heavenly influence they left behind them, was felt for many a day. As soon as they were gone I inquired of friend Bryant, who was the third party? He replied, "It was a female who came with Washington and left with him; and I presume it was his lady." Verily, thought I, such modesty is conspicuous without ostentation. Friend Bryant's wife (for such we find spirits still call their companions) was another sample of similar modesty. It was some weeks before we found out who that spirit friend was, whom he had brought with him almost as strong as himself, as he told us. When we asked him at the first to introduce our new friend, he answered—"Names are nothing."

Now friends, a few more questions have come to mind whose proper place would have been in number three; but as friend Bryant cares little for names, I shall not be censured for caring as little for numbers, and so I will propound them on the spot. At what point did you enter Nathan? "When he was connected with E. the good spirits entered at the pit of the stomach,—she being more negative than N., is more easily entered. So passing through her, we easily possessed him. She having passed the judgment, has no affinity, but for goodness. She, therefore, absorbed the portion of our spiritual essence, which so wonderfully sustained her during all those struggles, loss of sleep, etc."

Where did the Devils enter him? "They entered him, if the Mediums were connected, at the elbow of that arm, the hand of which rested on his knee." Why was this? "They had no more affinity for her, than she had for them; and so they had as little to do with her as possible, and yet gain ready access to him." Do you possess a spirit distinct from your bodies? "Yes, the same as yourselves." Did your bodies then actually enter into him? "No, we threw a portion of our spirits into him, so as to sustain life, or use his organs of speech as the case might be." How do

you write through a Medium? "We stand near the elbow and play the appropriate muscles of the arm, by a jet of electro-Magnetism, from the ends of our fingers, as a man would thrum the strings of a violin." I should think it would require time to play skillfully upon so foreign and delicate an instrument. "It does, especially if the player was not accustomed to ply his own muscles in the same work, while in the body. But if a ready writer on earth, he can easily play a similar instrument, though owned by a neighbor. Sometimes, too, when we find a brain easily impressed, and the thoughts readily controlled, we impress the mind with what we wish written. In such cases we have considerable assistance from the man himself, in playing his own muscles. Such men, if very conscientious, are apt to think it is mostly of themselves and refuse to write."

The following advice was written out through E's hand, on an afternoon to be expressed to the circle by friend Bryant—"Men and angels should shun the society of evil persons, lest they be like them, and lose their souls. Avoid them, till you are more advanced in wisdom. Bear all things in quietness. Let wisdom, more and more guide the inner and outer circles and God will bless."

Can you give us any conception of how, or in what manner, you are able to impress your friends in the body? "Thoughts are peculiar motions of the mind; and while these motions are evolving or constituting, if you please, a certain train of thought in our own minds, we discharge them upon your brain, where they beget in your minds, the identical thoughts that existed in our own. In other words, we empty our thoughts upon your minds, as we would empty one dish into another."

*On inquiring why a spirit very dear to us on earth, (though not of strong mind) so seldom visited us, friend B. replied, that she was too weak to encounter the evil spirits with whom we were contending—that it was seldom safe for her to visit us at present, as she would be liable to be drawn down to her injury.

Attempted Proscription in the Legislature.

A few days ago, a proposition was submitted to the Massachusetts House of Representatives, to prohibit, by law, all meetings of Spiritualists or others for the investigation of Spiritual phenomena!

This proposal, which might perhaps be legitimately entertained by a despotic government, but which is so glaringly inconsistent with a republic, was presented by a Dr. FRANCIS COGGSWELL, who, we are informed, has acquired considerable pecuniary property by the manufacture of patent medicines, such as the "regular" medical faculty would term "humbugs." Notwithstanding this fact, he professes to be very much opposed to what he is pleased to call the "humbug" of Spiritual communication! We gather from the Boston papers the following account of this singular attempt to infringe upon the liberty and rights of mankind: Mr. Coggs, member from Bedford, offered the following:

Ordered, That the Education Committee consider what legislation, if any, is necessary to protect the ignorant and credulous from delusive acts of "spirit rappers" (so called) whose blasphemous assumptions are fearfully engrossing the minds of a large portion of the community, producing insanity, robbing men of their property, destroying domestic happiness, and filling hospitals for the insane with the dupes of this popular humbug; also that they take into consideration the expediency of making it a penal offense for the owner or lessee of any building in any city or town in this Commonwealth to let the same, or any part thereof, for the purpose of holding the blasphemous meetings of "spirit rappers," with full power to send for persons and papers. Explained by the mover, and adopted.

With a view of showing the absurdity of the above, and not with the serious expectation that it would pass, Mr. PRINCE, member from Essex, presented the following:

Ordered, That the Committee on Education, to whom was referred an order in relation to "spiritual manifestations," be empowered to send for persons and papers, and that they cause an order of notice to be served to the parties implicated, viz., the "spirits" themselves, that they may have an opportunity to appear in their own defense, and not be judged upon an *ex-parte* hearing.

[Mr. PRINCE supported this order in some humorously pertinent remarks. He said that he understood it was the

policy of this Commonwealth not to interfere with the private religious opinions of any citizen, whether the consequences of such opinions might or might not, in some few isolated cases, seem to be deplorable. If some persons have become deranged by attendance at a camp-meeting, the State has not prohibited camp-meetings; or if some have become maniacs from a belief that they have sinned away the day of grace, or committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, the State has not prohibited the preaching of such doctrines. He offered his order as seriously as the gentleman from Bedford had offered his—one had been received—he thought the other ought to accompany it. Mr. COGGSWELL of Bedford, replied, charging the gentleman with being a believer in the rappings, and hence the necessity of legislation, when a member of so sensible a body as this was a victim to the delusion. Mr. IVES of Salem, moved the rejection of the order. Mr. SEVER of Boston, called for the previous question, and the order was so disposed of.]

When the subject came up in the Senate, on the question, of concurrence with the House, Mr. Coggs's "order" was unceremoniously rejected! So the matter ends.

[For The New Era.]

Signs of the Times.

Hopedale, April 18, 1853.

BR. HEWITT:

In addition to the letter published in your last number, I send you the following extracts from letters also called forth in response to my Pamphlet entitled "Incidents of Personal Experience." Perhaps it may be well to publish these as indications of the state of feeling in regard to the Spirit-movement, among certain classes generally thought to be decidedly conservative in this respect. Doubtless this is true as a general rule, but there are some noble exceptions, as these extracts will plainly show. They were written by Unitarian ministers, with the exception of the closing note, which came from one high in the ranks of civil life. He has been accustomed, in times past, to exercise a leading influence in our National Councils; but, as will be seen by his note, he has found time to investigate and accept the new and beautiful theory of Spirit and mortal intercourse. As the letters are of a private character, the names of the writers are withheld from the public.

n. s.

BROTHER SNOW:

I thank you for a copy of your "Incidents of Personal Experience" which I received last evening, and which I have just finished reading.

I have read it with great interest. Indeed it is about the best thing I have read on the subject. It supports well the "Spiritual" theory, while it hits those knowing opponents just where they will feel the blow.

I do not feel as confident as you do, that these communications are from departed Spirits, but am free to say that this is the most reasonable solution of the phenomena which has come to my knowledge. It may be that there are some secret laws of mind, which if understood would account satisfactorily for these wonderful manifestations; but to think so requires a no less stretch of credulity than to accept your side of the matter. Indeed there is nothing unreasonable in the spiritual view. It is evident that spirits have communicated with mortals, if we can credit the Old and New Testaments, and why may they not again?

Though I do not feel as confident as yourself that these manifestations are Spiritual, I am nevertheless fully convinced that the subject demands the most thorough investigation, and I am very glad that you have directed your remarks to the ministers. The 'knowing ones' affect to sneer at the whole subject, and they think that a sneer will conceal their own stupid ignorance of what they affect to despise; but they mistake; the sneer only directs attention to the "Asses' ears."

Your pamphlet will do good. It will be read by all those ministers to whom it is directed, though some may read it where they are commanded to pray, and perhaps too with the door shut.

Very truly Yours,

DEAR BR. SNOW:

I have just received and finished reading your "Personal Experience," and must confess that I have been a good deal interested and almost convinced—I think quite inclined to receive evidence from observation should the op-

portunity occur. I thank you heartily for the pamphlet, and shall be happy to lend it to any who are desirous to inquire into the matter.

Numerous cases of decided deception and delusion in this part of the country, have been mixed with what may have been real, in a way to excite prejudice against it; and not having opportunity for fair investigation, I have paid little attention to the subject. But I am very glad to know what others have ascertained, and hope to receive truth as fast and as far as it is communicated and made evident as truth.

From a third letter, I make the following extracts, the first part of it having been occupied by the writer in giving his reasons for not engaging in an active, personal investigation:

"I prefer, therefore, to let those who have leisure, opportunity, and a disposition for it do the work of investigation, and let me avail myself of the results of their labors. I have faith in the wisdom and integrity of many who are deeply interested in the subject, and who, I have no doubt, will find out as much as I could, were I to devote to it the time and thought and effort which I now feel belong to another department of labor."

I hope those who are looking into the subject will not labor in vain. No doubt there are, and will be, ignorant and vain persons who will engage in it without benefit to themselves or others; but all who have become interested are not such; and if there is something of importance to be discovered and declared, they will bless the world with the use of their talents in this way.

You know that men sometimes get their train upon the track of habit, and prefer to keep it to the end of the way, rather than switch off on to a new track with the end of which they are unacquainted. The spiritual manifestations lead somewhere, and I hope if you take this track, you will continue to report progress, and if you find a bridge between this world and the next, and a good depot on the other side, that we shall have a map of the route and a good account of discoveries made."

Washington, Dec. 25, 1852.

REV. HERMAN SNOW:

Dear Sir: I have derived much pleasure and satisfaction from a perusal of your pamphlet entitled "Incidents of Personal Experience, etc. of Spirit life and action." It was loaned me by Rev. O.—D.—, an old friend and College class-mate of mine. Being "not published," as you observe, I am under the necessity of asking the favor of you to send me a copy.

I have paid considerable attention to this subject myself; and if I had attempted to give my personal experience and views in relation to it, I could not have done it more accurately than you have put them forth in your communication above mentioned.

Very respectfully Yours,

[For The New Era.]

Another Test.

South Boston, Apr. 15, 1853.

FRIEND HEWITT:

I have a little test, which may be interesting to your many readers. On the 3d inst., a few friends being present, we proposed a sitting for Spirit Manifestations. After waiting some time, my hand was moved, and the following written: "My name is Phineas Henderson. I left the Earth in Keene, N. H., the 16th of March. My age was 74 years. I was one of the oldest members of the New Hampshire Bar. Let this be a test." We could get nothing farther than the above. At last, a gentleman present thought he could find out about it, as he knew a young man who had just come from there. Another remarked, that he had an uncle living there, and would write to him. On inquiry being made of the young man, it was found that such a person lived in Keene, and was a member of the N. H. Bar, but nothing more, until a few days since, the gentleman who had an uncle living there, received a letter, which corroborated it, in every particular except that his name was Henderson, instead of Henderson. We have since heard that the young man wrote and inquired. The friend, in answering says, "I copy from the Keene Sentinel, the following: "Died in this town on Wednesday the 16th, after a short illness, Hon. Phineas Henderson, aged 74. Mr. H., by age and standing, was one of the Fathers of this town,—eminent as a lawyer and magistrate, and upright as a man and a citizen, commanding high respect and confidence. As a professing Christian,

his walk was uniform, and blameless. His loss will be sensibly felt, in our community. While residing in Chesterfield in the early part of his practice, he often represented the Town in the Legislature, and the 9th Senatorial District. Since he has resided here he also represented the town, and for several terms the 3d Councilor District." And now, may I ask, does this proceed from mundane influences, odd-force, or from spirits?

Yours &c.

M. E. KENDALL.

P. S. The spirit says he wrote his name rightly and that we made the mistake.

A Third Visit to Philadelphia.

At his second visit to Philadelphia John M. Spear was informed by the Association of Beneficents that it would be needful for him and his daughter (Mrs. Butler) to make a third journey to that city, in just four weeks from the time he left, and that it would be needful for him to remain one week; and he was also directed to widely herald the appointment. He left Philadelphia, Tuesday, April 19th. He may be addressed 104 New-st., Philadelphia, from May 17th to May 24th.

Communication from Daniel Webster.

We have received a lengthy, intensely interesting and important communication, which professes to come from the mind of Daniel Webster in the Superior State. And while we have no positively absolute faith of the identity in question, we may say in truth, that we see no good reason why it did not come from the personal source it claims as its origin. For this reason, as well as for the intrinsic worth of the paper in question, we shall give it to our readers. It will be found on the last page of number 27.

"The Rappers in London."

We have just received a letter from London entitled as above. It is full of intensely interesting matter; and among other things, announces the conversion of Robert Owen—the great head Infidel—to the belief in IMMORTALITY and the CHRISTIAN FAITH! Thus the New Dispensation does what Sectarianism never could do. We shall give the letter next week.

M. W. Tyler

Of Lancaster: Your paper was sent immediately on receiving your order. But we have just sent it over again. Look well to your Post Office. We have had several complaints about not getting the Era, when we know that nothing but the Post Office—not the Post Master; oh no, of course not—was, or could have been to blame.

Bills to Subscribers.

This week we send another set of bills to those who have not paid for their papers. Possibly there may be some mistakes. If so, let us be informed of it immediately, and they will be promptly rectified.

A short time ago we sent out a small number of bills; and in many cases, we have had prompt responses to our call. We trust the remainder will now be as prompt in helping to give us the necessary place to stand upon, so that with the lever of Spiritual Truth, we may be able to "move the world."

The New Era—Extra.

Those whose term of Subscription expires with this number, will find The New Era-Extra inclosed. To all such we shall send No. 27. And we shall take it for granted, that all we do not hear from before the issue of No. 28, do not wish the paper continued to them, and from such we shall withhold it accordingly. We trust, however, that not a single name will be lost to the ready support of this world-wide and heaven-appointed movement. We have been aided beyond our most sanguine expectations for the time. May the future give us equal strength to do our duty.

The New Era to Clubs.

See our Advertisement entitled "The New Era." It will be observed that we make new terms from this time forth, to all new subscribers, who may club together for the purpose of the more readily availing themselves of this Publication.

Specimen Numbers

Of The New Era will be sent to all who may desire.

Twelve Discourses on Government:

Purporting to have been delivered in Boston, Mass., Dec. 1852. By Thomas Jefferson, of the Spirit World. Through John M. Spear, Medium. Hopedale: Community Press, 1853.

Here are twelve remarkable Discourses on a theme not at all incompatible with the genius of Thomas Jefferson. The style of the book too, in the major part of it, at least, is such, according to our judgment, as he would not be ashamed of, were he either in this world or that. As to the ideas of these productions, they are of the most radical stamp. They "lay the axe at the root of the trees," if they do not pull the trees up by the roots. It is our opinion, that they aim to do the latter, so far as many institutions, habits and practices are concerned. The Plan of A New Government, is ingenious and comprehensive, of say the least. We like, too, the principle of transition from the Old to the New. It is a "wheel within a wheel," whose centrifugal force so far outstrips the latter, that it is obliged to fly off in a tangent into the region of nothingness. If we ever wished we were a spirit (out of the body) it is now, that we might be at the elbow of a thousand readers, in a brief space of time, and witnessing the various specimens of human nature, as they will shortly exhibit themselves, by reading this book. It would be a lesson for our wisdom at least. Buy the book and read it. If you do not agree with its doctrines entirely, it will not harm you. For terms, see advertisement in another column.

Sunday Meeting in Framingham.

The Editor will hold a Sunday Meeting in the Universalist Meeting House (so called) in Framingham, on the first Sunday in May.

Improvement of The New Era.

Do the Friends of this Paper wish to see the publication in every way improved? We certainly do, and shall spare no pains or expense in perfecting both its mechanical appearance and its matter. But in order to make any radical improvement in these respects, our friends must give us the means, in the shape of subscriptions. With a little extra effort on the part of each one, this can easily and readily be done. Will all those who take an interest in our work, think seriously of this matter? We assure them that everything in the shape of reasonable improvement shall be faithfully executed as soon as they give us the ability.

Littell's Living Age.

We have received the second number (NEW SERIES) of this exceedingly voluminous, interesting and useful weekly. The present number contains sixty-two pages of closely printed matter. In one year therefore, the "Age" gives no less than three thousand two hundred and seventy-six such pages; and all for six dollars a year. Any one sending six dollars receives the work postage free to any part of the United States. Address Little, Son & Co., Boston, Mass.

The New Era in Philadelphia, May be found at No. 89 South Sixth street, a few doors north of Spruce street. Samuel Barry is agent there, for the sale of our Paper, Messengers from the Superior State, etc. Mr. Barry also keeps on hand a large assortment of other Spiritual Works.

THE NEW ERA: OR HEAVEN OPENED TO MAN.

"Behold I make all things New." Hereafter ye shall see it. The subscriber is now issuing a Weekly Paper, with the above title, devoted to Spiritual Facts, Philosophy, and Life—published in the city of Boston on each successive Wednesday morning; it is printed on good paper, with fair type, in a folio form, with a beautiful vignette at the head of it, of Heaven opening and the angels descending—a picture which corresponds with the title of the publication, and is eminently significant of the New Age on which our world is entering. It is a medium for the higher order of Spiritual communication—a vehicle for the facts philosophy and practical suggestions of human correspondents, and for such editorial matter as the changing circumstances of the times and the needs of the public seem to demand. It is a free paper, in the best sense of the word: free for the utterance of all worthy and useful thought—free as Life and Love and Wisdom are free! It spontaneously avails all sectarianisms, (except to give it criticism), and is the unswerving advocate of Universal Truth.

Friends of Humanity, and Lovers of Spiritual Communication—do you want such a paper in this locality? If so, will you do me and the cause the favor to send in your name, with the pay in advance.

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The Newspaper and Periodical Press. All those Periodicals that give the above one conspicuous insertion in their columns, and call attention to it, will be entitled to the New Era for one year.

S. CROSBY HEWITT.

POETRY.

The following lines were composed by Spirits, and sung with great power at the Springfield Convention, by a Singing Medium:

We're Afloat.

We're afloat, we're afloat, on the world's rolling tide,
Bright Spirits attend us, in Christ we abide,
Our banner of Love, on high let it wave,
And float on in brave triumph over death and the grave.

Our cause is a just one, we've nothing to fear,
As long as kind Spirits are hovering near,
Then on to the conquest, our armor is bright,
We will strive for the cause of our God and the Right.

The world may deride, it may scoff, it may sneer;
Its pleasures—what are they when death draweth near?

Ah! then is the time that we need something more
Than the baubles of earth with all her vain store:
Hark! hark to the voice of the bright Spirit band,
And its echoes resounding aloud through the land;

'Tis a call from our God, blest are they who take heed,
'Tis an offering of love, 'tis a blessing indeed.

Then come to the banquet, the feast is prepared,—
All, all are invited, and great the reward;
For light is now breaking—its rays growing bright,—
It is shining upon us, a glorious light.

Then look up and behold, for the time draweth near;
But with Spirits to guide us, what have we to fear?

They will guide our frail bark safely over the sea,—
We're afloat, we're afloat, and our spirits are free!

We're afloat, we're afloat, and our spirits are free!
We're afloat, we're afloat, and our spirits are free!

[For The New Era.]

Conversations with Invisible Friends.

NUMBER FIVE.

Will you give some of your present thoughts concerning what we of earth call death?

"We think very differently about this from what we did while on earth,—of that you may be assured. It is no longer an object which seems an evil, but on the contrary, to us it appears as one of the greatest blessings which have been bestowed upon man. We do not however on this account, think the less of the life which is now yours, but to us even that life seems a grand and beautiful thing. But when we call death a blessing, our thought is that, as this event is the introduction to a life far more grand and beautiful, therefore it ought not to be regarded in any other light than as a blessing."

"We shall not attempt at present, a full description of what seems to take place at the time of this event. But we will give you a few of our most vivid recollections as we now look back to the time when we cast off our earth-form and passed on into our present spirit existence. But it will be necessary, in the first place, that you should be informed that what takes place immediately before death, (as you call it), is seldom remembered with a distinctness sufficient to permit of a description. It is almost always the case that what then takes place, is so dimly recognized by the struggling spirit, that when at length it springs forth into the glorious freedom of this higher life,—there is nothing to be remembered excepting what seems like a long and confused dream. But when the event has thus fairly taken place, and we stand forth in all the brightness and buoyancy of the spirit-form,—then the recollection assumes a more clear and definite shape. We do not so much mean the recollection of what preceded, as of that which immediately succeeded the event in question. It is then so clearly seen that what has happened, has been but another of those wise and beneficent changes in the order of nature, that we wonder much, when we look into the minds of our mortal friends and see with what feelings of dislike it is still regarded by them. And when, in the process of time, we perceive one after another of those friends passing forward in the same grand order of progression, and are permitted to receive them into the embrace of our spirit-arms,—then our wonder is yet more increased, as in our intercourse with earth, we behold the strange terror with which this same glorious change is regarded by those who still remain on earth. But it is not well for us to follow this train of thought farther at present, though all we have said is but a small part of what might be said did the time and occasion seem to warrant it."

"We will now add a few words upon a point of the inquiry which by most mortals is regarded with the greatest dread. We allude to the suffering which is supposed to attend this event."

But if this were rightly understood by

you of earth, you would no longer shrink in such terror from what is before you. For the suffering which attends mortal dissolution is but a trifle compared with what most persons experience in the course of their earthly lives. There are instances however which seem to be exceptions to this statement,—instances like those in which some lingering disease has so intensified the sensitiveness of the nervous system that the closing effort of nature to throw off the gross material body is the severest of mortal experience. But generally, there is nothing but an apparent falling into a deep and a not unpleasant slumber, or trance. When this is past, the soul, with great joy, finds herself in regions whose brightness far outdazzles the powers of mortal thought."

Will you give, a little more at length, your impressions on first entering your Spirit Home.

"We cannot do this in such a way as to make you understand, in any considerable degree, the amazement and delight into which we were thrown. But we will say that all that mortals have conceived of in their most exalted flights of thought, is more—far more than realized, the moment the spirit is fairly freed from the entanglements of the earth-form and the brightness and freedom of the spirit-organism is assumed. But what is more especially surprising is the fact that it generally takes some time for the individual to convince himself, that he really is in the spirit-form. In most respects, it seems at first like the very same form we have been accustomed to, and that it has simply undergone some striking and unaccountable change."

"When, in our own experience, these first sensations of strangeness had passed away, there came gradually over us a sensation of extreme delight to find that we were indeed still in a tangible and regularly defined shape notwithstanding we had passed the bounds of mortality. And when at length we began to make use of our new and most delightful organism, we were yet more enthusiastically enraptured with the change which had taken place; for we found that this organism had all the advantages of our former one and none of its defects. But perhaps this last remark ought to be qualified a little, since absolute perfection of form is found only at that point of man's career when absolute perfection of character is reached; and this is not until a far more elevated condition than ours is attained."

"We will only say, in further reply to your inquiry, that in what has just been said, there is nothing intended which implies that man cannot fall as well as rise in his spirit-condition. This is a truth which has been too often overlooked in such communications as have come from our Spirit World. It is a truth that ought not to be overlooked, either by those in or out of the mortal body; for it is of a too serious nature to be thus left out of sight."

"We trust that these imperfect efforts to make known to you of Earth some imperfect thoughts of our Higher Life, will not be entirely without good results. It is not often that we can speak to you in so clear and reliable a manner as we can through this Medium."

Spirit Prayer

R. H. HOWARD, MEDIUM.

Those who have read the Message on "the Sabbath and Prayer," will better understand the following "Spirit prayer."

Father of Earth, of air, and sea; and of the Myriads of beings therein. Former of those countless hosts of glittering orbs, that roll through space, and beautify the etherial expanse of heaven, which we gaze upon with admiring wonder.

We acknowledge Thee, Omniscient and Omnipresent! We acknowledge Thee Beneficent and Just. We acknowledge Thee possessor of every attribute to form a perfect Being; and in every attribute perfect. We believe thou dost govern all thy formations by certain and unchanging laws.

Believing this, and acknowledging thee to be such a Being as thou art, we feel it to be folly, and worse than folly, to importune thee to change thy unchangeable purposes. Oh Father! we but humbly express our desires to know thy laws—to know thy will; and we express our determinations to abide thereby. In thus doing it is not our desire, or expectation, that thou wilt change thy purposes. But we hope to cheer and strengthen each other, that we may go forward as a united band of Brothers, to

labor in thy vineyard, and that every act of our lives may be to glorify thy name. Amen.

[For The New Era.]
Sunshine and Shadows.

DEAR READER:

Isn't there in life a strange blending of light and darkness, of gladness and gloom, of happiness and wretchedness? Don't you wonder oft, why wealth and want together pass down life's narrow path—why the lofty and lowly look coldly down and up despising each the other. When at the sepulchre's portal they lay off their woes and their laurels and sink together in oblivion's sea?

I have sometimes thought could we see behind the ermine and the tinsel we should learn that shadows rest not alone with misfortune's children. The prince would oft exchange his palace for the peasant's humble cot, could hearts be thereby exchanged—peace and purity gained.

We marvel not so much that gold and oppression, war and wine, cloud and corrupt the outer courts—the wilderness of the world, but we do wonder and mourn that in the inner courts, *profanely* called the Christian Church, shadows should fall. We mourn, too, that Bigotry, Infidelity, and Blindness have there gathered their disciples to make war with every soul who ventures beyond the scope of their limited visions. These are shadows—saintly shadows, perhaps, which from all time have fallen about the way of the Truth-seeker. The shadows are fading in the world's noon-day. Faith and Hope whisper, they will pass away ere long forever.

We see even now by the breaking light, a sunny side to the "Shadow Land." I have sometimes thought, earth would have no sunny spot, life no brightness, but for the reflection from that cloudless clime.

There friendship is not an idle name; there love-links are not broken; there no shadows cloud life's spring-time; no untimely frost chills the opening buds.

We are earthly, our hopes and affections are garnered here. We love the earth for its sunny nooks, and its noble, loving hearts; yet, for all that, to the spirit, bruised and crushed, there is a pleasure in looking beyond the cares that have chequered life's pilgrimage. There is a satisfaction in hoping, and dreaming of laying off a crown of thorns for the day of immortal bloom.

H. F. M. BROWN.

Spiritual Manifestations

Some of the modes in which the manifestations are made are the following:—One of them is by the hand of the medium coming under the influence and control of some external power, which uses it as a mere machine to write down what this power chooses should be written. In this case, the hand is as passive and involuntary as the pen which it holds, and the medium is entirely unconscious of what is to be written until it is seen upon the paper. It has been attempted to account for this mode of manifestation by *mesmerism* and *automatic action*. It is said that the thoughts of the inquirer are transferred to the mind of the medium, and these thoughts are written down by the medium. But there are several difficulties in the way of this solution. One of these is that the mind of the medium is not in the *mesmeric state*, in which state only can these thoughts be transferred. The medium does not go into a *trance*, but remains in the *natural* or normal state, with all its usual consciousness about it in relation to surrounding circumstances. Another difficulty is, that in the mesmeric state, the person mesmerised is *conscious at the time* of the thoughts, though he does not *recollect* them afterwards, which are transferred to his mind, and which he communicates to others in some way. But the medium is not usually *conscious* at all of the thoughts or information he communicates, until he sees it on the paper. A third difficulty is the *involuntary* motion of the hand in writing down the communication, which motion does not come within the influence of mesmerism, and cannot be accounted for by it. And a fourth difficulty is that in *mesmerism*, the operator exercises *his will* in transferring his thoughts, feelings and desires to the person mesmerised, whereas in the *manifestations* the inquirer does in no way exercise his *will* for this purpose, but is entirely *unconscious* of having himself these thoughts, etc., or of transferring them to the medium. How then can such a mode of communication by the medium be accounted for by *mesmerism*?

I do not see that it can be in any way.

A second mode by which these manifestations are made is by the *use of the alphabet and writing*. The medium takes a pen or pencil and points with it, going from letter to letter as rapidly as his hand can move. And the person receiving the communication puts down these letters as they are called by the medium, until the communication is finished. Will mesmerism or automatic action account for this mode? The same difficulties exist in regard to this mode as to the former. The medium is not in a mesmeric state, and is not conscious what the information communicated is, until it is written down. And the hand is moved involuntarily in going over the alphabet, which is not one of the effects of mesmerism.

A third mode by which the manifestations are made is by the inquirer asking questions, either mentally or orally, and receiving answers by the *raps* or by the *tipping of the table*, three of them meaning *yes* and one *no*. Now here the medium has no conscious agency at all in producing the raps, nor does he know what the answer will be until it is made by the raps or the tipping of the table. How can this be produced by mesmerism, unless you suppose the *table* to be mesmerised, which I believe never was asserted or supposed? Nothing but *mind* or an intelligent person can be mesmerised, not *matter*, such as a table. How then can you account for an affirmative answer by three raps, or a negative by one rap being obtained by mesmerism, or automatic action—and these in almost all cases correct answers? I do not see how it can be done.

A fourth mode by which the manifestations are made, is by the *use of the alphabet, writing, or the tipping of the table*. The medium takes the pen and goes from letter to letter in the alphabet, and when he points to the right letter, there is a rap, and this letter is taken down by the inquirer. In this way words are spelled out, until the communication is finished. And in this way *names* are spelled out. Now will mesmerism or automatic action account for this mode of communication? No; for the reasons assigned in the previous cases. And also because mesmerism cannot act upon the table at all, much less to make the raps and the tipping, exactly at the right time, to denote the letter which is to be taken down. This is altogether a physical effect, which mesmerism cannot produce.

A fifth mode of producing the manifestations is by *writing upon paper*, where no *human agency* at all is employed for this purpose. *Blank* paper has been repeatedly placed in various situations, and when it has again been looked at, writing has been found upon it. Will mesmerism or automatic action account for this, which by the supposition can only act through human agency, and which agency does not exist in this case?

But if all the preceding difficulties could be removed, there is another which is insurmountable. Mesmerism or automatic action, can only transfer the thoughts which exist in the mind of some one to the mind of another. But in most of the communications received through the medium, the thoughts contained in them do not, and never did exist in the mind of the inquirer, and of course cannot be transferred to the mind of the medium. The information is entirely *new*, both to the medium and the inquirer.

We have seen from the foregoing reasoning, that mesmerism and automatic action are altogether incompetent to account for these modes of manifestations. But another mode of accounting for them has been adopted, and that is *electricity*, or *magnetism*. And this, it seems to me, is as inadequate to account for them as mesmerism. And the first difficulty is, that electricity or magnetism being a physical power, will apply only to physical phenomena, and not to the mental or intelligent phenomena. It would apply only to the tipping or raps on the tables, but not to the *written* communications, whether by the alphabet or otherwise. For electricity or magnetism will no more produce these mental phenomena, than mesmerism will produce the physical phenomena.

But even supposing that mesmerism would account for the *mental* phenomena, and electricity or magnetism for the *physical* phenomena, will either of them separately account for both the mental and physical phenomena, when *conjoined* as they usually are? Certainly not, for the reasons before given. But will mesmerism and electricity, or magnetism, *acting together*, account for the physical and mental phenomena of these manifestations *occurring together*? And clearly not. For mesmerism, though it might act upon the medium herself, not being a *physical*

cause, would not act through her upon the table to produce exactly the right number of raps, and at the right time, in producing which the medium has no conscious agency. And electricity, or magnetism, though it might act upon the table in producing some kind of motion of it, would not produce this motion exactly the right number of times, and at the right time, to give the right answers, or in other words, would not act as an intelligent agent.

The difficulty is that the physical and mental phenomena of manifestation occur *together*, and neither mesmerism alone, nor magnetism or electricity alone, will account for both of them. Nor will mesmerism and electricity or magnetism *together*, account for these manifestations happening together. The result of the whole matter is, that these manifestations cannot be accounted for in this way. And, therefore, some other mode of doing it must be found. And there are any other mode which will solve all the difficulties but that of supposing that they are *Spiritual* in their origin?

W. S. ANDREWS.

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